

REMARKS

At the outset the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated March 8, 2004 has been received in its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the in-person interview conducted with Applicants' representative on September 7, 2004.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,560,590 B1 to Shwe et al. Applicants amend claims 1 and 4.

The rejection of claims 1-4 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1-4 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including for example "providing a contextual lexicon and contextual rules, said contextual rules relating to a context in which a term in said lexicon is used; receiving the natural language query, the natural language query having a plurality of text; [and] tagging the plurality of text in said natural language query using the contextual lexicon and contextual rules" (claims 1 and 4). None of the cited references including Shwe, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests that at least this feature of the claim dimension.

The structure of claim 1 of the present invention is different from the structure in Shwe in that Shwe does not disclose or suggest a "contextual lexicon" or "contextual rules" as recited in the claims.

Shwe discusses "a search system based on domain-specific key words combines a search engine with a pre-defined, domain-specific lexicon of terms that will be used." (Shwe,

column 7, lines 20-22). In addition, Shwe discusses a “Bayesian knowledge base 152 for the Bayesian network 151 from the single main knowledge specification 180. A Bayesian network knowledge base 152 is a directed acyclic graph, where nodes represent random variables, and directed arcs represent probability distributions of the probability of the states of the child node given the state of the parent node.” (Shwe, column 8, lines 60-66.) Shwe does not disclose or suggest “providing a contextual lexicon and contextual rules, said contextual rules relating to a context in which a term in said lexicon is used.”

In fact, Shwe specifically teaches against using a “contextual lexicon” or “contextual rules”. Shwe discloses “the present invention uses an extension of a regular grammar as the single main knowledge representation 180. Regular grammars are a proper subset of context free grammars” (Shwe, column 8, lines 9-12).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 4, and claims 2 and 3 which depend from claim 1, are allowable over the cited references.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early favorable action is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: September 8, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By



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